

Message Text

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ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SP-02 AID-05 EB-07 NSC-05 CIEP-01

TRSE-00 SS-15 STR-04 OMB-01 CEA-01 CIAE-00 COME-00

FRB-03 INR-07 NSAE-00 XMB-02 OPIC-03 LAB-04 SIL-01

SAJ-01 SAM-01 PA-01 PRS-01 USIA-06 NIC-01 EUR-12

ACDA-05 PM-03 DODE-00 FEA-01 OES-03 L-02 H-02 /111 W

----- 112845

R 031027Z APR 75

FM AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2239

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY MANILA

USLO PEKING

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

C O N F I D E N T I A L SINGAPORE 1324

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, ETRD, EINV, SN, CH

SUBJECT: SINGAPORE MISSION TO PRC

REF: SINGAPORE 1151 AND 1106

1. I.F. TANG, DEPUTY CHAIRMAN OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BOARD (EDB), WHO ACCOMPANIED FOREIGN MINISTER RAJARATNAM ON RECENT VISIT TO PRC, HAS PROVIDED FOLLOWING COMMENT ON VISIT WHICH GENERALLY CONFIRM CONTENTS OF REFTELS AND NEWSPAPER REPORTS.

2. TANG SAID GOS DELEGATION MADE IT CLEAR AT OUTSET THAT WHILE GOS IS "AN ANTI-COMMUNIST GOVERNMENT" IT IS NOT ANTI-PRC; GOS WOULD WELCOME FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF RELATIONS, ESPECIALLY AN EXPANSION OF TRADE WHICH COULD HELP REDRESS IMBALANCE WHICH CURRENTLY FAVORS
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CHINA. PRC DID NOT REACT ADVERSELY TO THIS "STRAIGHT TALKING",

NOTING THAT SINGAPORE, AS A MEMBER OF THE THIRD WORLD, MUST BE ALLOWED TO GO ITS OWN WAY.

3. TANG SAID PRC OFFICIALS TENDED TO CLASSIFY WORLD INTO THREE GROUPS: (A) THE TWO SUPER-POWERS, U.S. AND SOVIET UNION; (B) JAPAN AND EUROPEAN COMMUNITY; AND (C) THE THIRD WORLD. PRC OFFICIALS USED EVERY OPPORTUNITY TO CRITICIZE SOVIETS AND POINT OUT DANGER OF RELATIONS WITH THEM, BUT SAID NOTHING DEROGATORY ABOUT JAPAN OR U.S.; PRC SIDE ASKED ABOUT SERVICING OF SOVIET SHIPS IN SINGAPORE, SUBTLY SUGGESTING CAUTION WHEN SINGAPOREANS ASSERTED THESE WERE MERELY MERCHANT SHIPS (COMMENT: IN FACT A CONSIDERABLE NUMBER OF SOVIET NAVAL AUXILIARIES CALL AT SINGAPORE). PRC ALSO ASKED ABOUT ACTIVITIES OF LOCKHEED AND OTHER MATTERS WHICH INDICATED THEY HAD DONE THEIR HOMEWORK THOROUGHLY. IN REFERENCE TO LOCKHEED, PRC REPS CAUTIONED AGAINST SUCH DEALINGS WITH THE SOVIETS.

4. GOS DELEGATION WAS TREATED VERY COURTEOUSLY AND FELT THEY MAY HAVE RECEIVED ESPECIALLY WARM RECEPTION. TANG NOTED THAT THE PRC, IN ADDITION TO THE TRADITIONAL PROTOCOL BANQUET AND RECIPROCATION, TOOK FOREIGN MINISTER RAJARATNAM OUT TO A RESTAURANT AND SHOWED OTHER COURTESIES TO THE DELEGATION WHICH WERE, ACCORDING TO COMMONWEALTH COLLEAGUES IN PEKING, NOT TYPICAL FOR SUCH MISSIONS. HE NOTED WITH PLEASURE THAT PRC OFFICIALS IN PEKING PROPOSED TOASTS TO THE PRESIDENT AND PRIME MINISTER OF SINGAPORE.

5. TANG SAID PRC MADE NO DEMANDS OF SINGAPORE DEL DURING VISIT AND GOS DEL MADE NO COMMITMENTS. THE MATTER OF SINGAPORE'S RELATIONS WITH TAIWAN WAS NOT DISCUSSED.

6. TANG SAID PRC'S FAVORABLE ATTITUDE REGARDING INCREASING IMPORTS FROM SINGAPORE COULD ASSIST IN REDRESSING TRADE IMBALANCE CURRENTLY IN CHINA'S FAVOR AND MAY PROVIDE ADDED IMPETUS TO SINGAPORE'S INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM. PRC INDICATED THAT IMPORTS FROM SINGAPORE FactORIES COULD INCLUDE THOSE FROM FOREIGN-OWNED INCLUDING U.S. FIRMS. TANG REFERRED TO U.S. ELECTRONICS FIRMS WHICH PRODUCE INTEGRATED CIRCUITS AND OTHER ELECTRONICS COMPONENTS AND SAID IF ORDERS FOR SUCH GOODS MATERIALIZE, HE WOULD BE APPROACHING US ON THE QUESTION OF U.S. EXPORT CONTROLS. EDB IS CONVINCED THAT THIS CONFIDENTIAL

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RECEPTIVITY ON PART OF PRC FOR EXPANDING TRADE MIGHT ASSIST IN ATTRACTING FURTHER FOREIGN INVESTMENT TO SINGAPORE. HE COMMENTED THAT SOME PRODUCT OF SINGAPORE'S PLANNED PETROCHEMICAL COMPLEX MAY BE EXPORTED TO CHINA AND THAT THIS POSSIBILITY SHOULD INCREASE INTEREST IN INVESTMENT ON DOWN-STREAM PETROCHEMICAL INDUSTRIES.

7. WHEN QUERIED ABOUT ACTUAL BUSINESS THAT CAME OUT OF THE MISSION, TANG REFERRED TO ORDERS FOR TWO OIL-EXPLORATION RIGS COSTING U.S.

\$60 MILLION WHICH HAVE BEEN ORDERED FROM THE ROBIN LOH GROUP FOR DELIVERY IN 14 TO 18 MONTHS. HE SAID THE CHINESE WILL ORDER MORE RIGS AND INDICATED THEY ARE GIVING PRIORITY TO THE PETROLEUM SECTOR OF THEIR ECONOMY.

8. WITH REGARD TO FOLLOW-UP MISSIONS, THE GOS DOES NOT ENVISAGE FOLLOW-UP TRADE MISSIONS TO CHINA BY THE CHINESE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE OR OTHER PRIVATE GROUPS. TANG SAID GOS STILL CONCERNED ABOUT CHINESE CHAUVINISM AMONG SINGAPOREANS AND FOR THIS REASON WILL TEND TO MINIMIZE BUSINESS TRAVEL TO THE PRC, INSO FAR AS PRACTICAL. A PRC TRADE MISSION WILL PROBABLY BE COMING TO SINGAPORE, HE SAID, BUT THIS IS NOT YET AGREED. CRONK

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: FOREIGN RELATIONS, TRADE, NEGOTIATIONS, MEETING REPORTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 03 APR 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975SINGAP01324
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750117-0219
From: SINGAPORE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750485/aaaaczki.tel
Line Count: 127
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 SINGAPORE 1151, 75 AND 1106
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 09 JUL 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <09 JUL 2003 by ElyME>; APPROVED <10 JUL 2003 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SINGAPORE MISSION TO PRC
TAGS: PFOR, ETRD, EINV, SN, CH, (TANG, I F)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006